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EDU 7901

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Mini Study Part (c)

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| *Topic: Learning Communities* and student persistence in Community Colleges |
| **Research Questions** 1. What are the effects of learning community participation on first year Community College student’s GPA’s?
2. Do students who participate in Learning Communities during their first year of courses have lower attrition rates than those students who do not ?
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* **Identify Data:**

For this study, I have chosen to utilize secondary data records from the Office of Institutional Research (OIR) at Bronx Community College, CUNY. Ideally, my mini-study requires the observation of first year Learning Communities over the span of two semesters but because of the time constraints, associated with this mini study, I have determined the use of pre-existing data from Fall 2018 – Spring 2019 would be most advantageous. The data will reflect the relationship between Learning Community participation and Non-Learning Community participation with students grade point averages (GPA) for first year community college students. I have requested and been granted access to this information from the director of the Office of Institutional Research.

* **Variables:**

The Independent Variable (*IV*) that I have selected for my study is participation in a Learning Community (*LC*). There are two levels in this *IV*; students who participate in college *LC’s* until semester 3, and students who do not participate in college *LC’s* until semester 3.

The Independent Variable Type: Participation in a Learning Community is Quantitative in nature because we will seek to quantify the problem and collect numerical data. The ‘*IV’* is ‘active’ because it seeks to investigate the difference between the participants in Learning Communities and non-participants in Learning Communities. This is a ‘between subjects’ variable because two different groups will be examined and compared.

* The Dependent Variable (*DV*) that I’ve selected for my study is student GPA. For the measurement of GPA, I will use five levels: (A) | (B) | (C) | (D) | (F)

Operational Definition – the nominal score assessed at the end of a semester which reflects the level of academic rigor associated with students work / achievement.

* Gender and Race will be our extraneous variables for this study. They will not be directly examined during this mini-study, but with further exploration could have a statistically significant effect on the ‘*IV’* and thusly, could impact the results.
* The secondary data records will be retrieved through the Office of Institutional Research (OIR) at Bronx Community College, CUNY. The data, as provided by the Office of Institutional Research, serves as a guide for University policy, academic programming and administrative processes. This office is designed to obtain, administer and systematize university data in order to support the reporting needs of the University at large, including all obligatory federal, state and city reports. This data resource provides a high level of reliability and validity.